

# *Facts About*

## **STERILIZATION FOR WOMEN - TUBAL LIGATION**

**(HAVING YOUR TUBES TIED)**



### *What does it mean to have your tubes tied?*

Having your “tubes tied” means having an operation that will close your Fallopian tubes forever. This operation is called tubal ligation. After you have your tubes tied, an egg from your ovaries will not be able to go to your uterus (womb) to start a pregnancy. After this surgery, you do not have to use birth control when you have sex.

### *How long does it last?*

When you have your tubes tied (tubal ligation) it is permanent. This means that you will not be able to have a baby in the future.

### *What are good reasons for getting my tubes tied?*

If you are sure you do not want to have any more children, having your tubes tied works better than any type of birth control except

not having sex. Once your tubes are “tied” or blocked, it is almost impossible for you to get pregnant.

### *What if I get my tubes tied and change my mind?*

Only women who are very sure they do not want any more children should have their tubes tied. Reversing a tubal ligation is very hard to do and many times cannot be done. If you are not sure about having more children, you should use a birth control method which is not permanent.

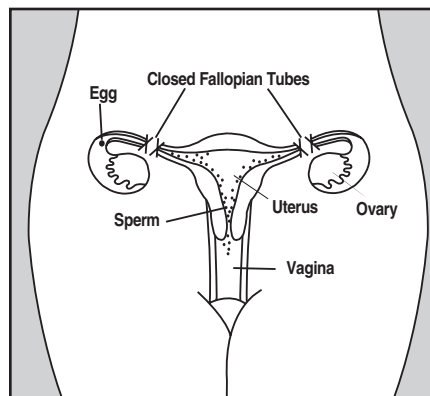
### *How is a tubal ligation done?*

To tie your tubes, the doctor first makes an opening in your body in order to reach your tubes. There are four ways your doctor can do this.

1. Laparotomy – a 3 to 5 inch opening in your abdomen or belly made by the doctor.

2. Mini-Lap – a 1 to 2 inch opening in your abdomen or belly.
3. Laparoscopy – one or two tiny (1/2 inch) openings are made in your abdomen or belly after it is filled with a harmless gas.
4. Vaginal Method – a small opening in the back of the vagina.

Once the doctor has made the opening, he or she takes out a section of each tube and ties or closes each tube with bands, clips or electric current.



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## *Facts About Sterilization for women – Tubal Ligation (having your tubes tied)*

### *Will it hurt to have my tubes tied?*

During the operation, you will be given medicine (anesthesia) so you will not feel any pain. After the surgery, you will probably feel some pain. If you do feel pain, it will not last more than a few days. Many women feel pains like monthly menstrual cramps. If you had a laparoscopy, you may feel pain in your neck or shoulders from the gas used to fill your stomach. If you had a general anesthetic, you may have a sore throat from the tube used to keep your breathing passage open.

### *Will they take out any of my female organs?*

No. The Fallopian tubes are cut and then sealed shut so that an egg cannot meet sperm and create a baby. Your uterus and ovaries will not be affected by having your tubes tied.

### *Will I have any problems if I get my tubes tied?*

Because having your tubes tied is an operation, problems can happen. Most women do not have problems when they have this operation and it is very rare to have a bad problem. Some of the very rare problems you can have are bleeding, an infection, blood clots, damage to the organs next to the area operated on or damage to a blood vessel.

### *Will I still have my monthly cycle (period)?*

Yes. Even though you cannot get pregnant, you will still have a monthly period. Having your tubes tied does not change the age at which your periods stop or when you have the change of life (menopause).

### *Can I breastfeed after having my tubes tied?*

Yes. Having your tubes tied does not affect your ability to breastfeed your baby.

### *Will having my tubes tied change my sexual desire?*

After the operation, you will probably feel the same because having your tubes tied does not remove any female organs or change how your body makes female hormones. Many women say they feel more sexual desire and enjoyment since they do not have to worry about getting pregnant.

### *When can I get my tubes tied?*

In order to receive a tubal ligation, you must be at least 21 years of age, and you must sign a surgical consent form giving permission to do the procedure 30 days ahead of time. If you want to have your tubes tied while you are in the hospital right after your baby is born, you must sign your papers at least 30 days before your baby is due. Once you have signed the papers, you can change your mind at any time.



## **REMEMBER:**

Having your tubes tied will not keep you from getting AIDS and other diseases you can get when you have sex. Use a latex condom to protect yourself.

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